

IN THE CLAIMS

✓Please cancel claims 7 through 10, and 17 through 21 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Please rewrite claims 1, 5, 6, 13 and 14 as amended herein as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

1. A rotary electric motor comprising:

a stator configured in the form of an annular ring having a plurality of groups of electromagnet poles, the groups substantially equidistantly distributed along the angular extent of the annular ring, each of the groups comprising magnetic material magnetically isolated and separated from the other groups, the electromagnet poles having pole faces separated from each other by gaps, gaps between pole faces within each group being of a substantially uniform first angular distance; and

an annular rotor, concentric with an axis of rotation and concentric with the annular stator to form a radial air gap therebetween, comprising a plurality of permanent magnets substantially equidistantly distributed with alternating magnetic polarity along the angular extent of the air gap and separated from each other by gaps of a second angular distance different from the first angular distance, the permanent magnets having a common magnetic return path;

wherein each group of electromagnet poles comprises windings that are switchably energized for driving electromotive interaction between the stator and rotor.

a³
5. A rotary electric motor as recited in claim 1, wherein the angular distance of the gaps between adjacent pole faces of each stator group differs from the angular distance of the gaps between adjacent stator pole faces of adjacent groups.

6. A rotary electric motor as recited in claim 5, wherein the angular distance of the gaps between adjacent poles of adjacent stator groups is different from the angular distance of the gaps between adjacent permanent magnets of the rotor.

a⁴
13. A rotary electric motor as recited in claim 1, wherein each stator group is individually secured to a non-magnetically permeable support structure, thereby facilitating independent removal and replacement of an individual stator group and a switched energization circuit component associated therewith.

14. A rotary electric motor as recited in claim 13, wherein said support structure comprises:

a plate member; and
a shaft member located at the axis of rotation;
wherein each of said stator groups is secured to said plate member at a spaced radial distance from the axis of rotation; and
said plate member is attached to said shaft member.